CHAPTER 4
RECONNAISSANCE

Infantry leaders of all ranks are responsible for continuous reconnaissance. The SBCT infantry battalion reconnaissance platoon is the battalion commander's tool to conduct this type of reconnaissance. The reconnaissance platoon conducts reconnaissance and surveillance missions before, during, and after all combat operations to obtain information of tactical value for the SBCT infantry battalion commander. To make valid decisions regarding courses of action, the commander must know in detail what to expect from the enemy, terrain, and weather in the area of operations. Reconnaissance and surveillance reveals the enemy's disposition, composition, strengths, and weaknesses and establishes the effects of weather and terrain on maneuver conditions. This information helps the commander to successfully maneuver against and apply overwhelming combat power to destroy the enemy. The battalion commander, S2, and S3 develop and direct the battalion's reconnaissance and surveillance effort.

The platoon conducts both mounted and dismounted reconnaissance. The platoon conducts dismounted reconnaissance to gather detailed information, to enhance security, or when moving in severely restricted terrain. It conducts mounted reconnaissance when time is critical or the area of operations is large. Mounted reconnaissance maintains the tempo of operations and makes maximum usage of digitized communications systems and optics. The reconnaissance platoon must never lose sight of its reconnaissance objectives or priorities. It should avoid engagements with enemy forces and engage enemy forces with direct-fire weapons only in self-defense.

Section I. PURPOSE AND FUNDAMENTALS

Based on the commander’s intent and guidance, the platoon conducts reconnaissance forward of friendly forces to provide current, accurate information about the enemy, terrain, weather, and physical resources within a specified area of operations. This provides follow-on forces with an opportunity to maneuver freely and rapidly to their objective. Reconnaissance keeps follow-on forces from being surprised or interrupted and prevents these forces from losing men and equipment en route to the objective. Reconnaissance platoons perform three types of reconnaissance: area, zone, and route. The following tenets provide a foundation to effectively employ and accomplish the mission of the reconnaissance platoon.

4-1. ORIENT ON THE RECONNAISSANCE OBJECTIVE

The reconnaissance platoon scheme of maneuver must revolve around the specific objective or objectives. The objective may be a terrain feature, a specific area, an enemy force, an NAI, or a checkpoint. The platoon must maintain its orientation toward the objective, regardless of what it encounters, until the mission is complete. For the reconnaissance platoon, the objective(s) are normally discussed in the battalion

reconnaissance and surveillance annex, the commander's critical information requirements (CCIR), or the execution portion of the OPORD. It is critical that the platoon leader understand the mission explicitly before he begins the planning process.

4-2. MAINTAIN TEMPO AND FOCUS

The platoon leader must ensure that the platoon focuses on reconnaissance objectives and keeps up the operational tempo of the mission. Operational tempo is not speed but is more a constant rate of movement over time, focused on the objective. If the platoon does not maintain tempo, it will quickly lose its combat effectiveness.

4-3. REPORT ALL INFORMATION RAPIDLY AND ACCURATELY

Commanders base their decisions and plans on the battlefield information that the reconnaissance platoon reports during reconnaissance. Information loses value over time. Reconnaissance teams must report all information exactly as they see it and as fast as possible using both analog and digital communications. Inaccurate information is dangerous. The teams must never assume, distort, or exaggerate. Information stating where the enemy is located is equally as important as information stating where the enemy is not located.

4-4. RETAIN FREEDOM TO MANEUVER

Reconnaissance teams must be able to maneuver on the battlefield. If the enemy fixes the reconnaissance teams, they must break contact on their own. They must continuously maintain situational understanding (SU), employ effective techniques of tactical movement, and react appropriately to unexpected developments. If the platoon makes contact, the platoon leader should break contact as soon as possible and avoid decisive engagement with the enemy.

4-5. ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN ENEMY CONTACT

The reconnaissance platoon must establish contact with the enemy without being detected. This allows them the ability to retain the initiative and control the situation.

4-6. DEVELOP THE SITUATION RAPIDLY

When the reconnaissance platoon makes contact with the enemy, it must determine as much as possible about the current situation. It must determine the size, composition, activity, and location of the enemy force. It must do so quickly and with little or no guidance from higher. Time is the reconnaissance platoon's most precious resource; wasting time could cause the platoon to fail to accomplish its mission.

4-7. ACQUIRE ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION

The battalion S2 and S3 are responsible for coordinating and directing the battalion's reconnaissance and surveillance effort. During the intelligence cycle, the commander establishes priority information requirements. This is information critical to the commander since it affects his plan. The PIR form the basis of the battalion's reconnaissance and surveillance plan. The S2 and S3 develop the reconnaissance and surveillance annex, which specifies the information that is needed by the battalion and assigns responsibility for obtaining that information. The battalion commander or S3

briefs the reconnaissance platoon leader on the specifics of the reconnaissance and surveillance annex. During this brief, the platoon leader ensures that he understands the commander's expectations; failure to do so can result in information that is not of any tactical value. The platoon leader then ensures that the reconnaissance platoon understands the specific reconnaissance requirements and the purpose of the reconnaissance. The reconnaissance mission is complete once all information is collected and transmitted to the correct headquarters or when the commander directs the platoon to end the mission and transmit the information collected so far. All information gathered should be disseminated to all members of the platoon.

4-8. AVOID DETECTION

The reconnaissance platoon must not let the enemy detect its presence in the objective area. The key is to see and not be seen.

a. If the enemy suspects that it is being observed, it may move its elements or increase security measures as part of its counterreconnaissance plan. If this occurs, movement in the objective area must be reduced; the patrol moves no closer to the objective than necessary.

b. Adequate time must be allocated for the reconnaissance to answer the battalion commander's PIR.

c. The platoon must exploit the technical advantages of its equipment, such as FBCB2, to gain information.

d. The platoon uses camouflage, discipline, and stealth to help avoid detection. It avoids routes covered by enemy radar, reconnaissance and surveillance, and target acquisition devices.

e. By reducing radio traffic, the reconnaissance platoon limits the possibility of being detected by the enemy.

f. Battlefield situations occur in which a reconnaissance patrol makes chance contact with the enemy, usually because a patrol moves too close to an objective. A technique for addressing these contingencies is to brief soldiers on situations concerning enemy contact and the risks the platoon leader will accept to obtain information.

(1) Although the intent of the reconnaissance platoon is to avoid enemy contact to preserve combat power, every soldier should know what action to take upon enemy contact. The platoon leader ensures the soldiers understand the engagement criteria by asking questions that affect the engagement decision (Figure 4-1, page 4-4).

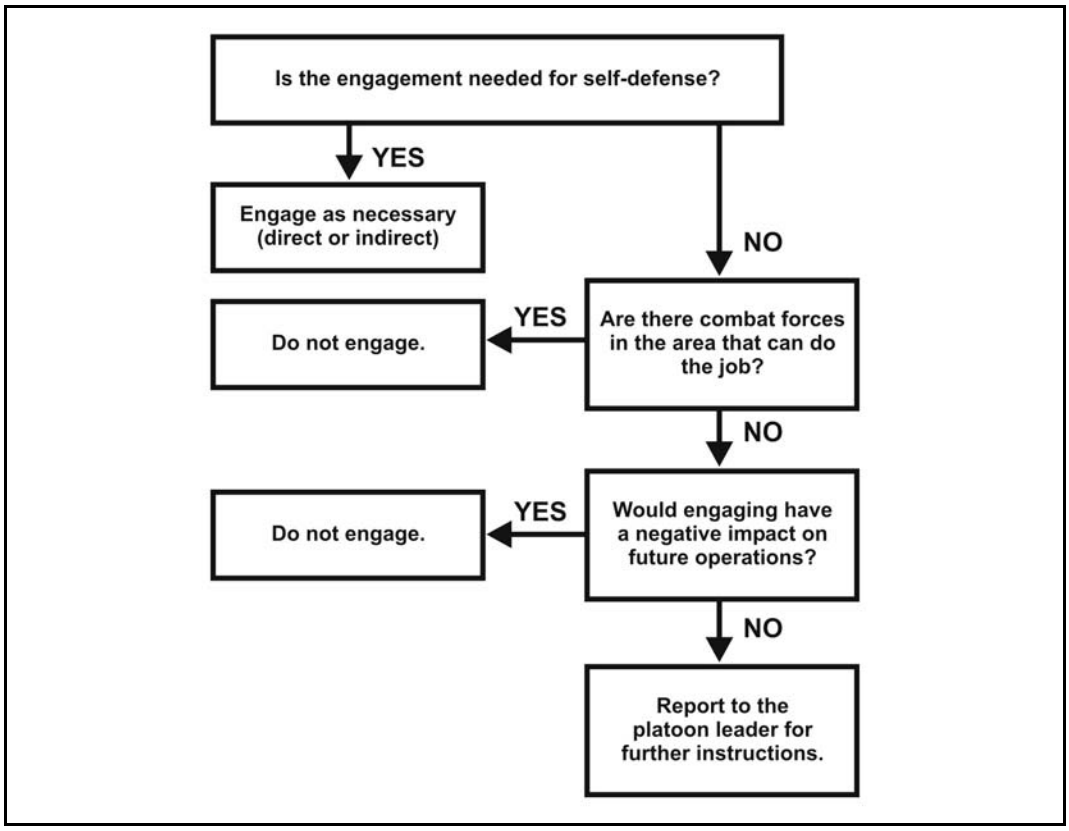

Figure 4-1. Engagement decision questions.

(2) Soldiers also need to know about the criterion of risk acceptance. If the commander wants a detailed sketch of the objective, he accepts the risk that the reconnaissance platoon will have to move close to the objective. If the commander wants general information, such as a location of an objective, then there is less risk. The platoon leader ensures the soldiers understand the risk involved in obtaining information.

4-9. EMPLOY SECURITY MEASURES

If detected, a reconnaissance element breaks contact using SOPs and then either returns to friendly lines or continues the mission. The platoon rehearses plans for breaking contact to include handling casualties. The platoon leader organizes the reconnaissance platoon based on METT-TC factors.

4-10. UTILIZE SENSORY TECHNIQUES

A soldier's ability to effectively use his senses is critical to effective reconnaissance, second only to the ability to move and observe without being detected. Equipment supplements the senses, enabling the observer to accurately portray the combat environment. Senses used in reconnaissance are sight, hearing, touch, and smell.

a. **Sight.** A soldier looks for--
   - Enemy personnel, vehicles, and aircraft.
   - Sudden or unusual movement.
   - Smoke or dust.
   - Unusual movement of farm or wild animals.

- Activity of local inhabitants.
- Vehicle and personnel tracks.
- Signs or evidence of enemy occupation.
- Recently cut foliage or vegetation.
- Muzzle flashes, lights, fires, or reflections.
- Amount and type of trash.

b. **Hearing.** A soldier listens for--
- Running engines or track sounds.
- Voices.
- Metallic sounds.
- Gunfire (by type of weapon).
- Unusual calm or silence.
- Dismounted movement.
- Aircraft.

c. **Touch.** A soldier feels for--
- Warmth of coals or materials from fires.
- Freshness of tracks.
- Age of food or trash.

d. **Smell.** A soldier smells for--
- Vehicle exhaust.
- Burning petroleum products.
- Cooking food.
- Age of food or trash.
- Human waste.
- Fires.
- Soap and hygiene products.

Section II. PLANNING

The platoon leader and battalion staff use the TLP and military decision-making process to develop the reconnaissance plan. Section and team leaders develop the plan based on the reconnaissance platoon leader's plan. Every soldier should have an understanding of the reconnaissance platoon's plan and the team's plan.

4-11. PLANNING, METHODS, AND EMPLOYMENT OF RECONNAISSANCE FORCES

Critical to the platoon leader’s ability to execute his mission is a clear understanding of the focus and tempo of the reconnaissance mission. This information comes from the battalion commander’s initial guidance, which answers the two basic questions the platoon leader needs to know to plan his mission (Figure 4-2, page 4-6). Essential commander’s guidance is an extension of the commander’s intent and is meant to fully clarify the commander’s intent for his reconnaissance platoon. The platoon leader receives the commander's guidance from higher and issues it to subordinates.

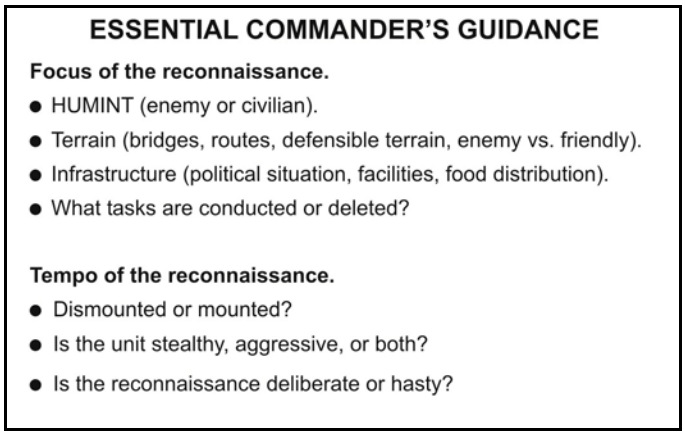

Figure 4-2. Essential commander's guidance.

a. **Focus**. The focus of the reconnaissance allows the platoon leader to determine which critical tasks he wants the platoon to accomplish first. It helps him narrow the platoon's scope of operations to get the information that is most important to the battalion's operations. The platoon focus is either terrain-oriented or enemy-oriented. In stability operations, the platoon might focus on local populace sentiment or on identifying local military leaders.

b. **Tempo**. The tempo of the reconnaissance allows the platoon leader to establish associated time requirements with planning time and movement formations and methods, such as dismounted or mounted. The platoon leader establishes the tempo by answering two questions: Is the platoon conducting stealthy or aggressive reconnaissance and is the reconnaissance deliberate or hasty? The reconnaissance platoon leader must understand the answer to the two questions and articulate them to his platoon.

- Stealthy implies unseen, time-consuming, dismounted operations minimizing chance contact where the platoon might be observed.
- Aggressive implies mounted, fast-paced operations.
- Deliberate reconnaissance operations are slow, detailed, and broad-based.
- Hasty reconnaissance operations focus the platoon on a few key pieces of information required by the commander.

4-12. RECONNAISSANCE METHODS

This paragraph describes the methods of conducting reconnaissance.

a. **Reconnaissance Patrols**. Reconnaissance patrols provide timely and accurate information about the enemy and terrain. The reconnaissance platoon may be tasked to conduct any of the three types of reconnaissance patrols (area, zone, or route). The patrol leader must have specific intelligence collection requirements for each mission. For a detailed discussion of reconnaissance patrols, refer to Chapter 10 of this manual.

b. **Mounted Reconnaissance**. Platoon members can frequently stay in their vehicles while conducting assigned reconnaissance tasks. Remaining mounted allows the reconnaissance platoon to conduct fairly detailed reconnaissance while maintaining the speed and momentum required for the operation. Mounted reconnaissance also allows the platoon to take advantage of the protection afforded by its vehicles.

(1) ***Employment Considerations***. Mounted reconnaissance is normally used under these conditions:

- Time is limited.
- Detailed reconnaissance is not required.
- The cavalry squadron (RSTA) is performing coordinated reconnaissance tasks in support of the infantry battalions.
- Ground sensors (such as GSR elements) are conducting reconnaissance activities in support of ground forces.
- IPB provides accurate information on the enemy.
- Terrain is open.

(2) ***Advantages***. Speed and momentum are rarely necessary in a reconnaissance operation, but they are often critical to the successful execution of offensive operations that the reconnaissance mission may support. In addition to speed, mounted reconnaissance offers platoon members the advantages of their reconnaissance vehicle. These advantages depend on the specific vehicle employed, but they can include armor protection, enhanced navigation and communications capability, enhanced optics, and limited firepower.

(3) ***Disadvantages***. The disadvantages of mounted reconnaissance include the loss of stealth due to the visual, noise, and thermal signatures of the vehicle and the loss of some detail because of restricted vision and impairment of the senses of smell and hearing. These disadvantages increase the risk to the platoon as it conducts reconnaissance.

c. **Dismounted Reconnaissance**. The primary purpose of dismounted reconnaissance is to obtain detailed information about terrain features, obstacles, or enemy forces. In addition, platoon members dismount and reconnoiter forward of their vehicles to provide security before moving through danger areas such as open spaces, hilltops, curves, or other blind spots on the battlefield. They also dismount to set up short- or long-duration OPs. (Refer to the discussion of patrolling [Chapter 10] and observation posts [Chapter 5] for additional information on how the reconnaissance platoon takes part in dismounted reconnaissance.)

(1) ***Employment Considerations***. In general, the reconnaissance platoon conducts dismounted reconnaissance when the following conditions apply:

- Detailed reconnaissance is required.
- Stealth is required.
- Enemy contact is expected or visual contact has been achieved.
- Restricted terrain is encountered.
- Time is available.
- Danger areas are encountered.
- Security is the primary concern.
- IPB indicates close proximity to enemy positions.

Dismounted teams provide security for each other as they move. When only an individual soldier dismounts, he should never move beyond effective overwatching fires of the vehicle.

(2) ***Advantages***. Dismounted reconnaissance is the preferred method when stealthy movement is desired. Teams on foot benefit from the concealment offered by vegetation and terrain; in addition, they do not emit a significant visual or audio signature. Dismounted reconnaissance techniques allow the reconnaissance platoon to observe

enemy vehicles and soldiers at close range without being detected. Soldiers conducting dismounted reconnaissance can also quickly transition to a stationary OP for a short period of time without suffering any loss of effectiveness.

(3) ***Disadvantages***. Disadvantages of dismounted reconnaissance include a relatively slow rate of movement for personnel on foot, extensive requirements for detailed preliminary planning and coordination, and considerable risk to soldiers conducting dismounted operations. Unless they establish a radio relay, teams cannot conduct dismounted reconnaissance in depth because of the relatively short range of FM man-portable communications systems.

(4) ***Tools for Dismounted Reconnaissance***. Dismounted platoon members employ a variety of equipment and other tactical tools to enhance their capability to report information accurately and to call for and adjust indirect fires. At a minimum, they carry the following items:

- SOPs.
- Personal weapons.
- Communications equipment.
- Signal operation instruction (SOI) extracts.
- Maps.
- Compass.
- Binoculars (and night-vision devices, if necessary).

4-13. REHEARSALS

To ensure everyone understands the plan, the platoon leader conducts rehearsals. Each has a specific purpose and result. The five types of rehearsals include--

- Confirmation brief.
- Backbrief.
- Combined arms rehearsal.
- Support rehearsal.
- Battle drill or SOP rehearsal.

4-14. ESSENTIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS.

The platoon sergeant assists the platoon leader in the development of the plan and coordinates support requirements. The following items are essential to reconnaissance planning:

a. Composition and task organization of the platoon and teams.

b. Information to be obtained by the reconnaissance element.

c. Movement routes and formations to the reconnaissance site for mounted and dismounted personnel.

d. Actions at the objective and use of control measures.

e. Special instructions to members of the mounted and dismounted reconnaissance and security elements.

f. Special equipment to be used during the reconnaissance.

g. Contingency plans such as--

- Actions on contact.
- Actions if the reconnaissance party does not return.
- Evacuation of casualties.

- Initial rally point (IRP) for RV extraction.
- Stay-behind surveillance.
- Indirect-fire support for movement and reconnaissance.
- Special communication arrangements.
- Withdrawal plan from the reconnaissance site.
- Plan for dissemination of information acquired during the reconnaissance.
- Deadline for reporting information to higher headquarters.
- Establishment of no-fire areas over OP positions once in position.

Section III. RECONNAISSANCE AND SURVEILLANCE HANDOVER

Reconnaissance and surveillance handover is the transfer of information and or responsibility for observation (surveillance) of an assigned area or enemy force from one unit to another. Battle handover is the transferring of the responsibility for conducting the fight from one commander to another. Battle handover is a coordinated operation executed to sustain continuity of the combined arms fight and to protect the combat potential of both forces involved. While reconnaissance and surveillance handover shares many critical tasks with battle handover, it focuses primarily on passing information and the related responsibility for surveillance of an area or enemy force from one unit to another. Reconnaissance and surveillance handover is normally associated with a designated area or graphic control measure (such as a phase line); it may cover a sector or zone, NAI, target area of interest (TAI), and or enemy contact. Reconnaissance and surveillance handover can be visual, digital (FBCB2), or FM voice.

4-15. REASON FOR SURVEILLANCE HANDOVER

Surveillance handover is designed to provide information connection, overlapping communications, and focus on the common commander's CCIR and reconnaissance objectives.

a. **Surveillance Handover.** The geographical point of reference or time of transfer of surveillance responsibility must be coordinated between the coordinating staff and commanders of the units affected or designated by the SBCT. The controlling higher headquarters provides the graphic control measures that depict the applicable phase lines and contact points, either digitally or on an overlay issued to subordinate units with the OPORD or FRAGO. Reconnaissance and surveillance handover is complete when the unit accepting the handover has established visual contact with the enemy element or has the area (NAI or TAI) under surveillance. The higher headquarters commander prescribes the specific criteria that mark completion of handover and ensures that both subordinate commanders understand these criteria.

b. **Critical Tasks for Unit Transferring Responsibility**. The unit responsible for surveillance must accomplish several critical tasks during change of responsibility. It must--

- Immediately establish FBCB2 linkage and enter appropriate communication nets of adjacent units.
- Continuously report to the unit accepting surveillance responsibility the location, size, and composition of all enemy forces as well as the enemy's current activity. If the enemy is attacking, the unit conducting the surveillance reports the enemy's direction of movement, movement formation, and

estimated rate of advance. If the enemy is defending, the unit conducting the surveillance reports the enemy's locations, orientation, composition, engagement areas (EA), reserves (if known), obstacles, and flanks.

- Coordinates with the unit accepting surveillance responsibility to determine contact points at which subordinate elements (such as reconnaissance sections) will physically coordinate handover with representatives of the unit accepting surveillance responsibility. Once contact points are determined, the surveilling unit leader digitally sends a FRAGO to all sections, specifying where they will physically coordinate the change of responsibility for surveillance of the enemy with the unit accepting surveillance responsibility.
- Ensure that each section or team acknowledges where it must physically coordinate the change.
- Maintain visual contact with all enemy units, while avoiding decisive engagement, until change of responsibility is complete.

c. **Critical Tasks for Unit Accepting Surveillance Responsibility**. The unit accepting surveillance responsibility must accomplish a variety of critical tasks when ordered to conduct surveillance handover. It must--

- Establish communications with the unit conducting the surveillance and coordinate necessary contact points.
- Ensure that contact points are manned and that maneuver elements have established personal communications with their representatives.
- Position security forces (if working with the platoon) where they have the best possible observation of enemy avenues of approach (AA), adjusting as necessary for limited visibility conditions.
- Ensure that routes through the obstacle system (if emplaced in the AO) are clearly marked and physically controlled by guides or that escorts are provided to the unit handing over surveillance responsibility.
- Ensure that all routes of withdrawal obligated to the unit conducting the surveillance are unobstructed and facilitate rapid movement to the release point (RP).
- Ensure that designated routes of advance, attack positions, and routes to the point where responsibility for surveillance is changed are clear and facilitate rapid movement.

d. **An Example of Surveillance Handover.** In this example, the cavalry squadron (RSTA) is conducting a zone reconnaissance forward of the SBCT. The battalion's reconnaissance platoon has been given a mission to conduct area reconnaissance missions behind the cavalry squadron (RSTA) to develop attack positions and then conduct surveillance of TAIs in support of the battalion's attack. This configuration allows the reconnaissance platoon to conduct a thorough reconnaissance while taking advantage of the security the cavalry squadron (RSTA) provides. The reconnaissance platoon has been assigned a movement route to move to its assigned areas. The battalion's reconnaissance platoon conducts physical and FM and or digital linkup with the RSTA reconnaissance element directly to its front and with the lead infantry rifle company that directly follows the platoon.

(1) En route to its OPs, the reconnaissance platoon maneuvers into the cavalry squadron's AO. They report real time information to the battalion and its lead companies.

Once the conditions are set, the battalion's reconnaissance platoon conducts the on-site surveillance handover, coordinated by the battalion S3, with the cavalry squadron to its front.

- The cavalry squadron (RSTA) reports that it bypassed an enemy OP consisting of a light skinned wheeled vehicle and six to eight indigenous personnel armed with automatic weapons and RPG-7s. The cavalry squadron also provides additional information concerning the terrain and enemy on the battalion's objective.
- The cavalry squadron (RSTA) and the battalion's reconnaissance platoon also coordinate passage of lines for the platoon to move into OPs that observe the assigned TAIs.
- The platoon executes the handover from the cavalary squadron (RSTA) and reports the contact to the battalion and the follow-on companies; it also updates the FBCB2 overlay with the OP contact and updates the enemy template on the objective.
- The battalion accepts responsibility for the enemy OP contact and directs the reconnaissance platoon to bypass the OP and continue the mission.

(2) The reconnaissance platoon establishes OPs to observe TAIs and support the battalion's attack.

- The reconnaissance teams provide a visual contact SITREP and then lead the rifle companies to positions of advantage using covered and concealed routes identified en route to their linkup point.
- The reconnaissance platoon leader now has enough information to physically point out enemy and friendly locations and routes to the flank and rear of the enemy and to continue to support the battalion's attack.

4-16. ADDITIONAL MISSIONS

Given the capabilities of the reconnaissance platoon, many commanders require it to assist other units in the passage of lines. Primarily, the reconnaissance platoon enhances the command and control function for the commander. The platoon may be required to conduct one or all of the critical tasks of a stationary or passing unit or may assist its parent unit in the following ways:

- Elements of the reconnaissance platoon may assist in securing contact and passage points where units will meet and pass.
- The reconnaissance platoon may reconnoiter possible passage lanes (primary and alternate), mark their locations, and find bypasses.
- The reconnaissance platoon may guide units from contact points to or through passage lanes. The platoon may also control traffic at the passage point and in the lane.
- Reconnaissance platoon elements may be positioned in the passage area to act as a communications link in case units involved in the passage have trouble communicating with each other.

- The reconnaissance platoon may conduct area reconnaissance of attack positions (forward passage) and assembly area locations (rearward passage). This reconnaissance effort may include a requirement to check for NBC contamination.
- The reconnaissance platoon may assist the commander by occupying OPs or conducting patrols to provide a continuous flow of information about the enemy situation.

4-17. DIGITAL SYSTEMS

Digital systems assist the battalion staff in its coordination and synchronization efforts for the operation. Each unit transmits or delivers a complete copy of its OPORD and overlays either by digital (FBCB2 and MCS) or conventional (hardcopy and acetate overlay) means. Any changes made after initial distribution are updated immediately. The coordination effected between the two commanders includes--

- Establishing digital and FM voice communications.
- Providing updates of both friendly and enemy situations (digital, voice, and graphic).
- Coordinating passage points and routes and ensuring these are displayed on operational overlays (digital and conventional).
- Collocating C2 and exchanging liaison personnel (if required).
- Coordinating fires and fire control measures (direct and indirect) and ensuring these are displayed on operational overlays (digital and conventional).
- Determining the need for and dispatching contact point representatives.
- Establishing and coordinating recognition signals (conventional).
- Providing the location of obstacles and related covering fires.
- Providing route information to include waypoints.
- Determining CS and CSS requirements.

Due to the fluid nature of a battle handover, digital coordination may be too difficult to accomplish. Commanders determine if digital systems can be used to speed the planning, coordination, and execution process. However, FM voice may be the most prudent method of coordinating and executing battle handover.

Section IV. AREA RECONNAISSANCE

Before moving forces into or near a specified area, the commander may call on his reconnaissance platoon to conduct an area reconnaissance to avoid being surprised by unsuitable terrain conditions or unexpected enemy forces. The area could be a town, ridgeline, woods, or another feature that friendly forces intend to occupy, pass through, or avoid. The commander frequently employs area reconnaissance to gain information on objective areas, to confirm the IPB templates, and to provide detailed information regarding enemy dispositions. Within an area of operations, area reconnaissance can focus the reconnaissance on the specific area that is critical to the commander. This technique of focusing the reconnaissance also permits the mission to be accomplished more quickly. Area reconnaissance can thus be a stand-alone mission or a task to a section or the platoon. Like zone reconnaissance, area reconnaissance can be either terrain- or force-oriented. The commander analyzes the mission using METT-TC to

determine whether the platoon will conduct these types of reconnaissance separately or in conjunction with each other.

4-18. TASKS

The reconnaissance platoon must accomplish numerous tasks during the area reconnaissance.

a. **Primary**. The platoon's primary tasks include the following:

- Find and report all enemy forces within the area.
- Reconnoiter specific terrain within the area.
- Report reconnaissance information.

b. **Other**. In addition to the primary tasks, the reconnaissance platoon must be prepared to conduct other tasks as directed by the higher commander. Additional tasks for the area reconnaissance include the following:

- Reconnoiter all terrain within the area.
- Inspect and classify all bridges within the area.
- Locate fords or crossing sites near all the bridges in the area.
- Inspect and classify all overpasses, underpasses, and culverts.
- Within capability, locate all minefields and other obstacles in the area, reduce or breach them, and clear and mark lanes.
- Locate bypasses around built-up areas, obstacles, and contaminated areas.

4-19. MOUNTED TECHNIQUES

The order to conduct an area reconnaissance mission identifies the area to be reconnoitered within a continuous boundary. The reconnaissance platoon leader analyzes the mission, enemy, and terrain and completes his troop-leading procedures. He also plans the movement to (and, if necessary, from) the area, following the basic rule of using different routes to and from the area. The battalion reconnaissance and surveillance plan specifies the ingress and egress routes for the platoon.

a. The platoon’s primary concern during movement to the area is security rather than reconnaissance. If the platoon leader feels there may be enemy forces along the route to the area to be reconnoitered, the platoon should employ the principles of tactical movement based on METT-TC factors. The platoon leader must also incorporate information from TUAVs and ground sensor assets (such as GSR) into the operation. The platoon may be augmented with Javelin AT systems. The Javelin’s command launch unit (CLU) thermal sight has a range of more than 3,000 meters and can be used to observe the area. (See Appendix F for information on Javelin employment.) During movement to the area, it may be appropriate (depending on the commander’s intent) for the platoon to avoid physical contact with the enemy. The platoon leader may also choose to orient and focus sections or teams on checkpoints as the platoon moves to the area.

b. The platoon leader encloses the given area within a platoon zone; he uses boundaries, an LD, and a limit of advance (LOA). He can divide the area into section zones by placing boundaries on identifiable terrain. By doing this, the platoon leader ensures that each section has responsibility for specific pieces of terrain.

c. The platoon leader places contact points at the intersections of phase lines and boundaries and any other places he wants physical contact and coordination between his reconnaissance (recon) sections. He can use the terrain index reference system (TIRS) as

necessary. He works with the fire support officer (FSO) to plan indirect fires to support the platoon's scheme of maneuver.

d. The platoon can conduct area reconnaissance using either two 2-vehicle sections or four individual vehicle elements. Vehicle formations are often not appropriate to the area reconnaissance mission because of the wide variety of METT-TC considerations the platoon may encounter.

4-20. DISMOUNTED TECHNIQUES

The platoon leader conducts an area reconnaissance to obtain information concerning the terrain or enemy activity within a prescribed area. The major actions required during dismounted area reconnaissance include moving to and occupying an objective rally point (ORP), conducting a leader's reconnaissance, conducting actions at the objective, and withdrawing and disseminating information. The patrol conducting the area reconnaissance reconnoiters and surveils the reconnaissance objective. To obtain the required information, the patrol uses a series of vantage points around the reconnaissance objective to observe it and the surrounding area. The patrol uses long-range and short-range observation and surveillance. The platoon leader may assign the task to the entire platoon or to individual teams. In the latter case, either the platoon leader or platoon sergeant locates at a position, usually the release point, which allows good C2. The platoon leader can use single or multiple teams. Security measures depend on the situation.

a. When the battalion orders the reconnaissance platoon to conduct an area reconnaissance, it identifies the area to be reconnoitered within a continuous boundary. The reconnaissance platoon leader analyzes the mission, enemy, and terrain and completes his troop-leading procedures. He also plans the movement to and, if necessary, from the area following the basic rule of using different routes to and from the area. The routes are specified for the platoon in the battalion reconnaissance and surveillance annex.

b. The platoon's primary concern during movement to the area is security rather than reconnaissance. If the platoon leader feels there may be enemy forces along the route to the area to be reconnoitered, the platoon should employ the principles of tactical movement based on METT-TC factors. The platoon leader must also incorporate information from the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and ground sensor assets (such as GSR) into the operation. During movement to the area, it is imperative for the platoon to avoid physical contact with the enemy. The platoon leader may also choose to orient and focus sections or teams on checkpoints as the platoon moves to the area.

c. The platoon leader uses boundaries, an LD, and an LOA. He can then divide the area into section zones by placing boundaries on identifiable terrain; this ensures that each section has responsibility for specific pieces of terrain.

d. The platoon leader should focus sections or teams on checkpoints as the platoon moves through the area. He uses graphic control measures as necessary. He works with the FSO to plan indirect fires to support the platoon's scheme of maneuver.

e. The platoon can conduct area reconnaissance using any of the platoon organizations. The platoon leader deploys his sections based upon the factors of METT-TC to accomplish their reconnaissance and surveillance tasks. Dispersed movement formations are often not appropriate to the area reconnaissance mission because the area

may be irregular in shape and because of the wide variety of METT-TC considerations the platoon may encounter.

4-21. OBJECTIVE RALLY POINT

During planning, the platoon leader selects a tentative ORP based on a map reconnaissance or, if possible, a physical reconnaissance.

a. From the leader's standpoint, the ORP should offer--

- Cover and concealment.
- Easy short-term defensibility.
- Location that is easy to find.
- Proximity to objective to simplify control.

b. The platoon leader then decides how to occupy the ORP. Every member of the reconnaissance platoon must know how to execute this task. The patrol can use the triangle technique (Figure 4-3), patrol bases, and rally points to occupy an ORP.

c. While in the ORP, the patrol makes final preparations for the leader's reconnaissance and actions at the objective.

d. With a five-man team, the leader can leave two soldiers to secure the ORP. The other three team members conduct the reconnaissance and provide security.

e. The patrol team leader may cache equipment in the ORP and take the entire team on the reconnaissance.

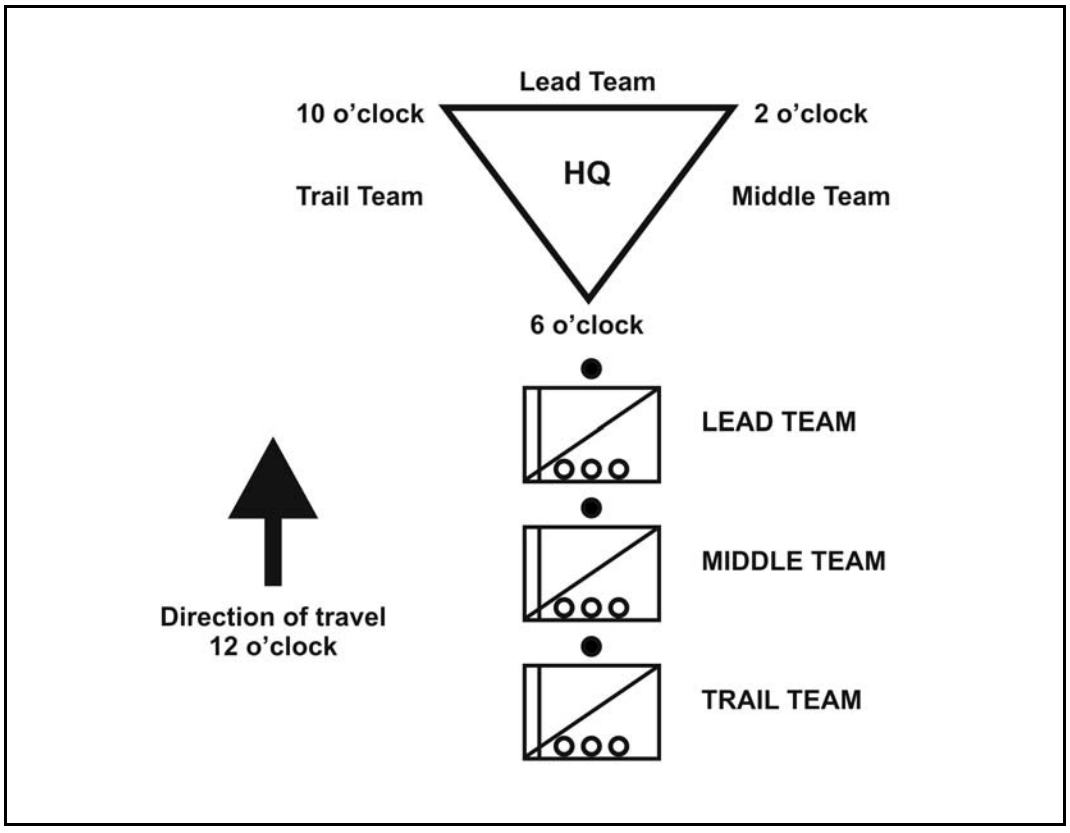

Figure 4-3. Occupation of an ORP using the triangle technique (3 teams).

4-22. LEADER'S RECONNAISSANCE

During the area reconnaissance, the platoon and team leaders conduct their own reconnaissance. This allows them to determine whether to modify the plan for actions at the objective and allows them to ensure smooth execution of the reconnaissance. A leader's reconnaissance of an objective may include the following tasks:

- Pinpoint the objective. If possible, accomplish this by checking terrain features in the area, not by directly approaching the objective.
- Locate observation or surveillance positions, routes, and security positions.
- Determine or confirm the enemy situation in the objective area, locate enemy OPs, determine enemy security status and activity, and adapt the patrol to the local sounds in the area.
- Designate the release point and the positions for the reconnaissance and control and security elements.

4-23. ACTIONS AT THE OBJECTIVE

Once the patrol pinpoints the objective, designated elements conduct the reconnaissance, viewing the objective from as many locations as necessary. Movement in and around the objective must be cautious and slow. If the control and security elements separate from the reconnaissance elements, they occupy a position that will allow them to place direct or indirect fire on the objective, if necessary. The patrol leader decides how detailed a reconnaissance to conduct. Thoroughness counts but so does avoiding detection. Two techniques for conducting reconnaissance include long- and short-range observation and surveillance.

a. **Long-Range Observation or Surveillance**. The ideal way to observe and survey an objective is from a distance--out of sight and out of range. When METT-TC permits the patrol to gather the required information from a distance, it does so from an OP (Figure 4-4). This reduces the chance of detection or vulnerability to enemy small-arms fire and local security measures. When one OP proves insufficient, then team-sized reconnaissance patrols occupy successive or multiple OPs. Using available cover and concealment, each patrol finds the best possible view of the objective.

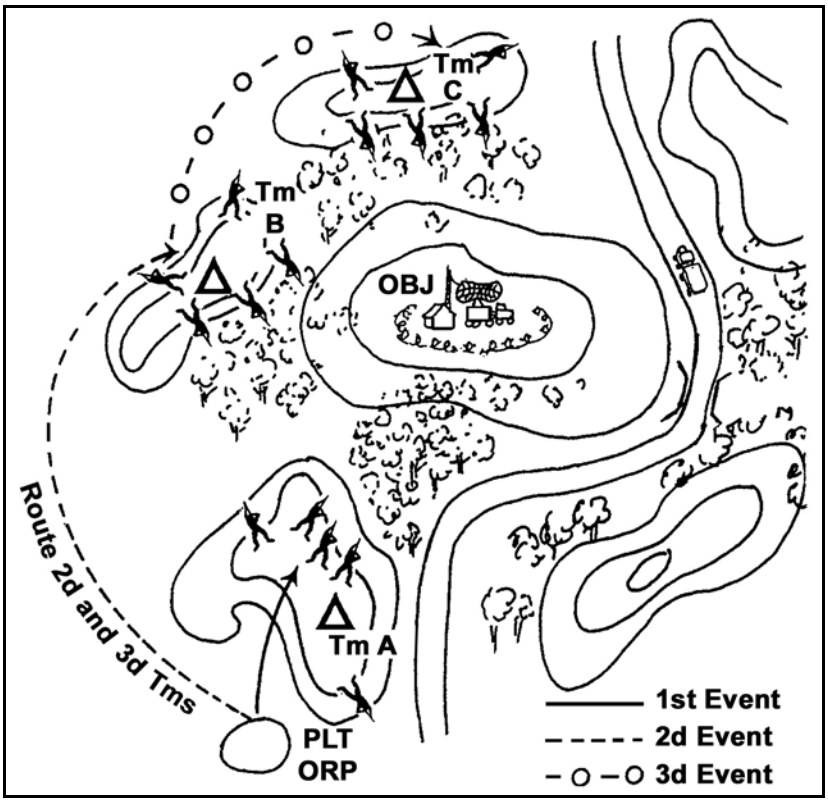

Figure 4-4. Example of long-range observation.

b. **Short-Range Observation or Surveillance**. Sometimes, to get the information needed, the patrol (platoon or team) must observe within range of enemy weapons systems (Figure 4-5, page 4-18). When the platoon as a whole operates at short range, the leader must clearly define the routes and area to be reconnoitered.

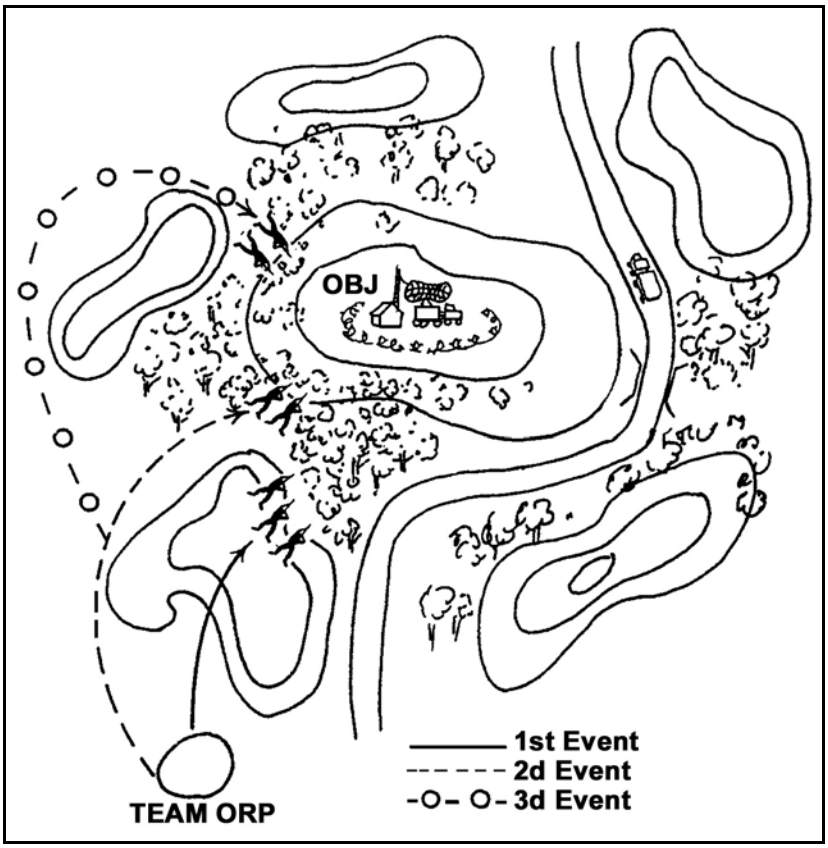

Figure 4-5. Example of short-range observation.

(1) Once the reconnaissance platoon leader has identified the objective, he looks for possible routes and locations from which he can observe the objective. He then briefs the plan to the reconnaissance element. The size of the reconnaissance element should be limited--for a team, two men conduct the reconnaissance while the others provide security. Once the control and security element is in position, the reconnaissance element begins slow and deliberate movement to the objective. This may require the soldier to low-crawl a considerable distance, taking time, energy, and patience. Individuals take only the equipment that is necessary. When moving, one soldier moves while the other observes. They continue using this method until the reconnaissance element reaches its final position.

(2) Once in position, the reconnaissance element observes and listens to acquire the needed information. No eating, no talking, and no unnecessary movement occur at this time; soldiers prone to coughing or sneezing should be in the control and security element. If the reconnaissance element cannot acquire the information needed from its initial position, it retraces the route and repeats the process. This method of reconnaissance is extremely risky. The reconnaissance element must remember that the closer it moves to an objective, the greater the risk of being detected. The reconnaissance element moves only as close to the objective as necessary.

(3) The control and security element has limitations on what it can do. The security element should go where it can observe the objective and, if possible, the reconnaissance element. If it cannot observe the reconnaissance element, it should know the element's

general location. If the enemy compromises the reconnaissance element, the control and security element calls for fire and places direct fire on the objective. This method of reconnaissance is difficult. The reconnaissance elements and the control and security elements should think through and rehearse well their actions at the objective and contingency plans.

4-24. WITHDRAWAL AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

After reconnoitering, the reconnaissance and control and security elements return to the ORP or to a rally point. Control and security elements remain in position until the reconnaissance elements leave the objective area. Once all elements arrive in the ORP, each element leader debriefs the soldiers. He then moves to the center of the perimeter to give the information to designated recorders. The recorders write the information and make or collect sketches of the objective. Element leaders share the information obtained with the soldiers. This ensures that everyone has the information and, if necessary, can relay it back to battalion. If the platoon leader wants to increase the security of the platoon, he can give the soldiers the information on the move or he can move the platoon away from the ORP to another ORP. If he chooses the latter, he might move one terrain feature away.

Section V. ZONE RECONNAISSANCE

Commanders normally assign a zone reconnaissance to the reconnaissance platoon when they need detailed information before maneuvering their forces through the zone. The reconnaissance provides the commander with a detailed picture of how the enemy has occupied the zone, enabling him to choose the appropriate COA. Zone reconnaissance can be terrain-oriented, force-oriented, or both. The reconnaissance platoon conducts terrain-orientated zone reconnaissance to gain detailed information about routes, terrain, and resources within the assigned zone. This is the most thorough and complete reconnaissance mission and therefore is very time-intensive. The reconnaissance platoon conducts force-oriented zone reconnaissance to gain detailed information about enemy forces within the zone. As the platoon conducts this type of zone reconnaissance, its emphasis is on determining the enemy's locations, strengths, and weaknesses. The techniques and objectives of terrain-oriented and force-oriented reconnaissance are not mutually exclusive. The commander's intent, specifically the focus of the reconnaissance and METT-TC factors, dictates if the platoon conducts these two types of reconnaissance separately or in conjunction with each other.

4-25. TASKS

The reconnaissance platoon must accomplish numerous key tasks during the zone reconnaissance.

a. **Primary**. Its primary tasks include the following:
- Find and report all enemy forces within the zone.
- Reconnoiter specific terrain within the zone.
- Report information higher.

b. **Other**. In addition to its primary tasks, the platoon must also conduct other tasks as part of this type of reconnaissance. These tasks may include the following:

- Reconnoiter all terrain within the zone.
- Inspect and classify all bridges within the zone.
- Locate fords or crossing sites near all bridges in the zone.
- Inspect and classify all overpasses, underpasses, and culverts.
- Within capability, locate all minefields and other obstacles in the zone and mark lanes and bypasses.
- Locate bypasses around built-up areas, obstacles, and contaminated areas.

4-26. MOUNTED RECONNAISSANCE TECHNIQUES

Zone reconnaissance is very time-consuming. Unless the orders specify otherwise, all tasks listed in the previous discussion are implied in the zone reconnaissance mission statement. When speed is the primary concern, commanders must modify the mission statement or prioritize the critical tasks for the platoon leader.

a. The width of the zone is determined by the road network, terrain features, anticipated enemy activity, and time available to accomplish the mission.

b. When the reconnaissance platoon leader receives a zone reconnaissance mission, the order defines the zone by lateral boundaries, an LD, and an LOA or objective. The battalion may include additional phase lines or other graphic control measures within the zone to help control the maneuver of the battalion.

c. The platoon leader analyzes the mission to determine what must be accomplished. He analyzes the commander's guidance on focus (the reconnaissance objective: enemy, terrain, or a combination) and tempo (time allowed for mission accomplishment: aggressive, stealthy, deliberate, or rapid). He evaluates any information he has received from the IPB to determine what enemy activity he should expect to encounter. He then analyzes the terrain by conducting a map reconnaissance and by examining any imagery intelligence (IMINT), signal intelligence (SIGINT), HUMINT, or information from other reconnaissance units (for example, RSTA) to determine the types of terrain in which the platoon must operate. This reconnaissance is important in identifying areas the enemy could occupy based on observation capability, fields of fire, and natural obstacles. From these factors, the platoon leader determines the manner in which the reconnaissance platoon will accomplish its mission.

d. The platoon leader completes TLP and develops a COA to accomplish his assigned mission. He may add phase lines on easily identifiable terrain through the zone to help control the maneuver. He places checkpoints in specific areas that must be reconnoitered or where they will aid in controlling the operation. If the terrain is mixed with both extensive dead space and easily identifiable features, he may use boundaries to designate areas of responsibility for each section. He places contact points at critical areas where he wants to ensure that sections maintain contact.

e. The platoon leader works with the battalion FSO to plan indirect fire targets to support the platoon's scheme of maneuver. As a minimum, they should plan targets on known or suspected enemy positions.

f. Depending on applicable METT-TC considerations, the platoon can conduct the zone reconnaissance using a two-section or four-vehicle organization. It must deploy to cover the entire zone. Additionally, the three dismounted teams can operate independently of the vehicles. The platoon usually operates in a zone it knows very little

about, so the COA must allow for flexibility, responsiveness, and security during movement.

g. The platoon leader deploys the reconnaissance sections and teams on line across the LD and assigns each section or team a zone within the zone for which the platoon is responsible. He uses phase lines, checkpoints, or contact points to ensure that the reconnaissance platoon reconnoiters the entire zone. He ensures that the reconnaissance sections remain generally on line to prevent development of significant gaps that a moving enemy could exploit. Platoon members dismount to gather detailed information, reconnoiter danger areas, or move through areas that are not accessible to the vehicles. The reconnaissance platoon continues to reconnoiter the zone until it reaches the LOA or the final reconnaissance objective.

4-27. DISMOUNTED ZONE RECONNAISSANCE TECHNIQUES

Zone reconnaissance focuses on obtaining detailed information concerning routes, obstacles (to include chemical or radiological contamination), terrain, and enemy forces within a zone defined by boundaries. A zone reconnaissance is assigned when the enemy situation is vague or when information concerning cross-country trafficability is desired. A reconnaissance platoon and other reconnaissance elements (infantry platoons or squads) acquire this information by reconnoitering within the zone, by maintaining surveillance over the zone, or by coordinating area reconnaissance of designated locations within a zone. The platoon leader organizes the reconnaissance platoon based on METT-TC. This analysis determines whether the platoon uses single or multiple teams to conduct the reconnaissance. As in an area reconnaissance, the following methods may be used as long as the fundamentals of reconnaissance are applied.

a. **Single Team**. Single-team reconnaissance is favored when--
   - Specific information requirements can be gathered within the required time by a single reconnaissance element.
   - Control of multiple teams in the objective area is difficult.
   - Terrain is open and visibility is good.
   - Enemy security measures, such as patrols, sensors, and radar, are active in the area.

b. **Multiple Teams**. Multiple-team reconnaissance is favored when--
   - The area to be reconnoitered is too large for a single team. In this case, the platoon leader uses multiple reconnaissance teams to complete the reconnaissance on time.
   - Several angles of observation are needed.
   - Terrain is difficult and visibility is poor.

4-28. DISMOUNTED RECONNAISSANCE METHODS

The methods used to move multiple reconnaissance elements through a zone are fan, converging routes, and successive sectors. To reduce the possibility of fratricide, effective command and control is important when conducting reconnaissance with multiple elements .

a. **Fan Method.** The element leader selects a series of ORPs throughout the zone. When the element arrives at the first ORP, it halts and establishes security. The element leader selects reconnaissance routes to and from each ORP, with the routes forming a

fan-shaped pattern around the ORP (Figure 4-6). A technique for determining routes is to divide the route into four separate legs. The distance of each leg remains constant with respect to one another. Whatever the initial azimuth is, the leader adds or subtracts 90 degrees. For example, if the initial azimuth is 360 degrees, the corresponding return azimuth is 90 degrees, 180 degrees, and 270 degrees. This ensures that a patrol leaves the ORP in one direction (360 degrees) and returns in another direction (270 degrees). Once the routes are selected and briefed to the team leaders, the teams execute accordingly. The platoon leader may send one or all three teams, or he may send two and keep one team as a reserve. The platoon leader or platoon sergeant can accompany one of the teams or remain at the ORP. The platoon leader also sends the teams out on adjacent routes. This prevents the patrol from making enemy contact in two directions. After the platoon has reconnoitered all the areas (the "fan"), it reports to battalion, moves to the next ORP, and repeats the action.

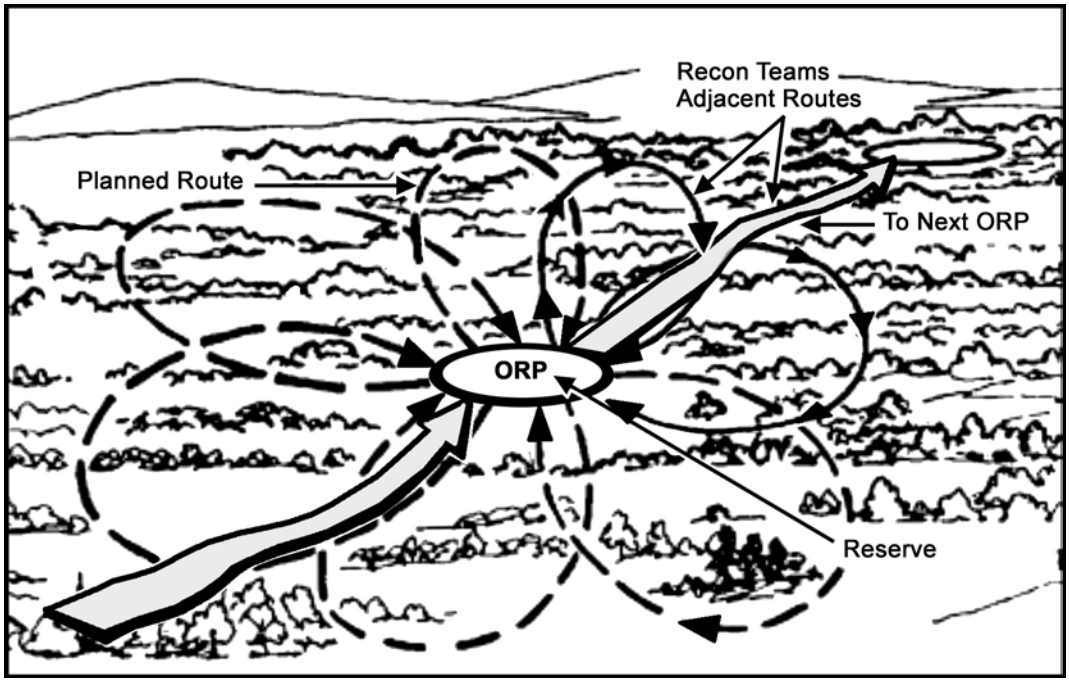

Figure 4-6. Fan method.

b. **Converging-Routes Method**. The platoon leader selects an ORP, reconnaissance routes (through the zone), and a rally point (Figure 4-7). (The rally point is where the platoon links up after the reconnaissance.) Once the platoon arrives at the ORP, it halts and establishes security. The platoon leader confirms the platoon's location and selects a reconnaissance route for each team, a rally point, and a rendezvous time. A team is sent out on each route, which they reconnoiter using the fan method. At a designated time, the entire platoon meets at the rally point, an easily identified terrain feature that is secured the same as the ORP. Once there, the platoon consolidates and disseminates all information obtained. The platoon leader sends the information to higher headquarters and, based on guidance from battalion, returns to friendly lines or continues the mission.

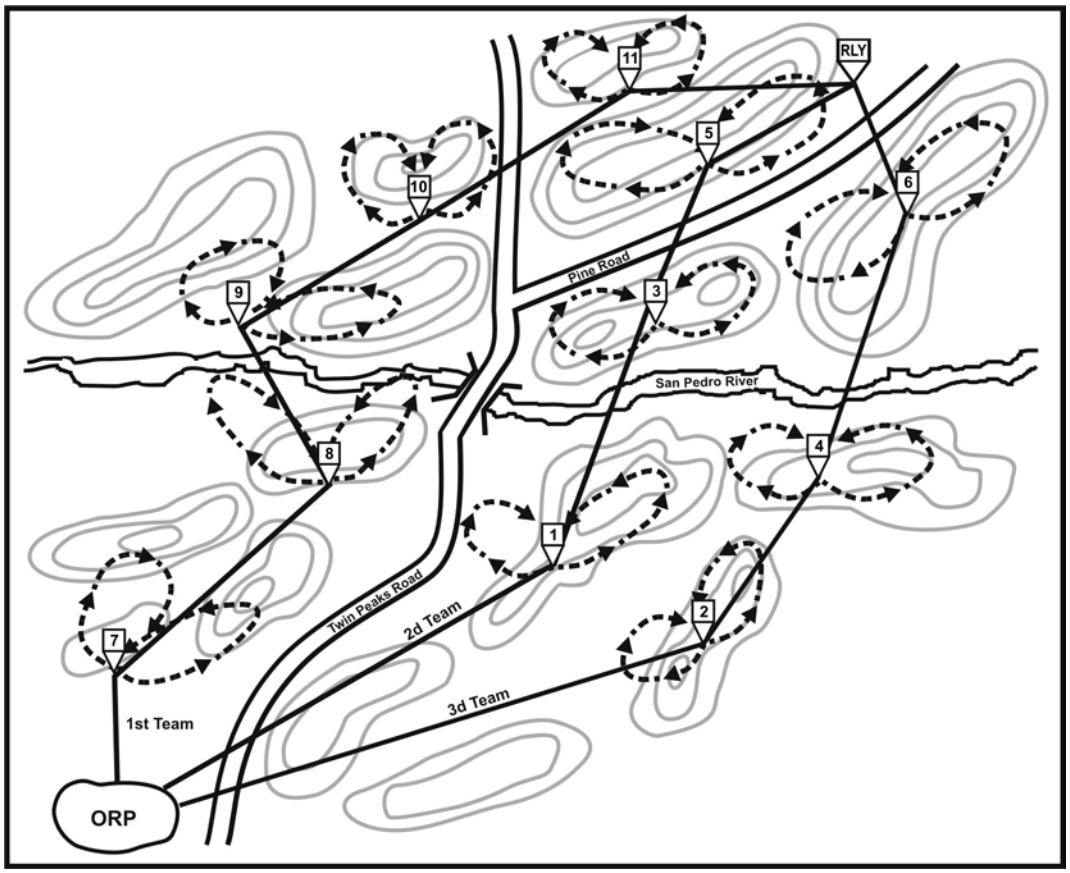

Figure 4-7. Converging-routes method.

c. **Successive-Sectors Method**. The successive-sectors method (Figure 4-8, page 4-24) is a continuation of the converging-routes method. The platoon leader selects an ORP, a series of reconnaissance routes, and rally points. The platoon's actions from each ORP to each rally point are the same as in the converging-routes method. (Each rally point becomes the ORP for the next phase.) When the platoon links up at a rally point, the platoon leader again selects reconnaissance routes, a linkup time, and the next rally point. This action continues until the platoon has reconnoitered the entire zone. The platoon then returns to friendly lines.

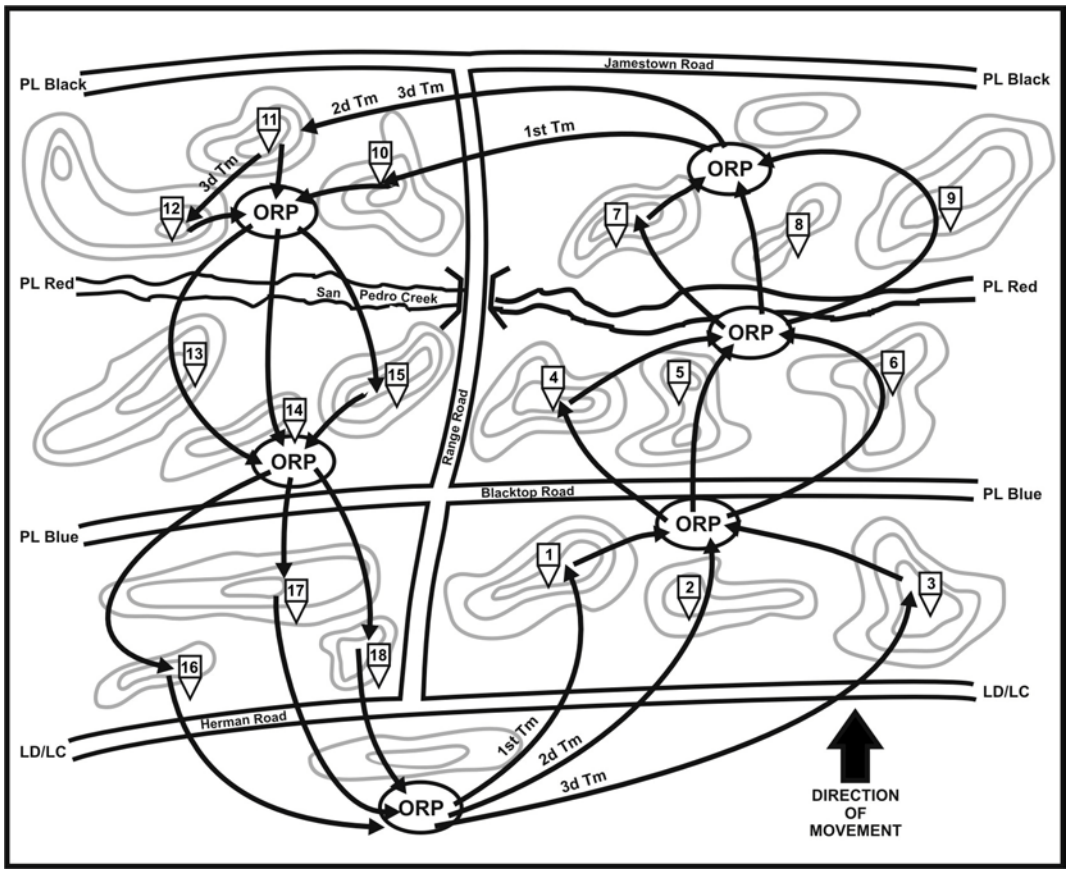

Figure 4-8. Successive-sectors method.

Section VI. ROUTE RECONNAISSANCE

The purpose of route reconnaissance is to provide detailed information on trafficability, enemy activity, NBC contamination, and the adjacent terrain from the viewpoint of both enemy and friendly forces. Route reconnaissance focuses on obtaining information about a specified route and all terrain from which the enemy could influence movement along that route. Route reconnaissance can orient on a road, a railway, a waterway, or a general direction of attack to provide new or updated information on route conditions or activities along the route.

4-29. PURPOSE

The battalion commander orders a route reconnaissance when he needs information on routes to and in his assigned area of operations. Usually, he gives an overlay to the reconnaissance platoon leader along with specific information requirements needed for specific routes. Possible information requirements include the following:

- The available space in which a force can maneuver without being forced to bunch up due to obstacles. This requirement includes the size of trees and the density of forests due to their effects on vehicle movement.
- The location and types of all obstacles and the location of any available bypass. Obstacles can consist of minefields, barriers, steep ravines, marshy areas, or NBC contamination.
- The enemy forces that can influence movement along the route.

- The observation and fields of fire along the route and adjacent terrain. This information assists planners as a supplement to map information.
- The locations along the route that provide good cover and concealment.
- The trafficability for the type of forces using the route.
- The bridges by construction type, dimensions, and classification.
- The landing zones and pickup zones.

4-30. ORGANIZATION

When conducting a route reconnaissance, the platoon leader organizes the reconnaissance platoon based on the factors of METT-TC. Depending on the time available, he conducts a thorough map reconnaissance and plans a series of fans (Figure 4-9) along the route to provide detailed terrain information. (Fans are the preferred reconnaissance method.) The platoon must reconnoiter roads and trails intersecting or traversing the route until they reach terrain where the enemy could influence friendly movement from adjacent terrain.

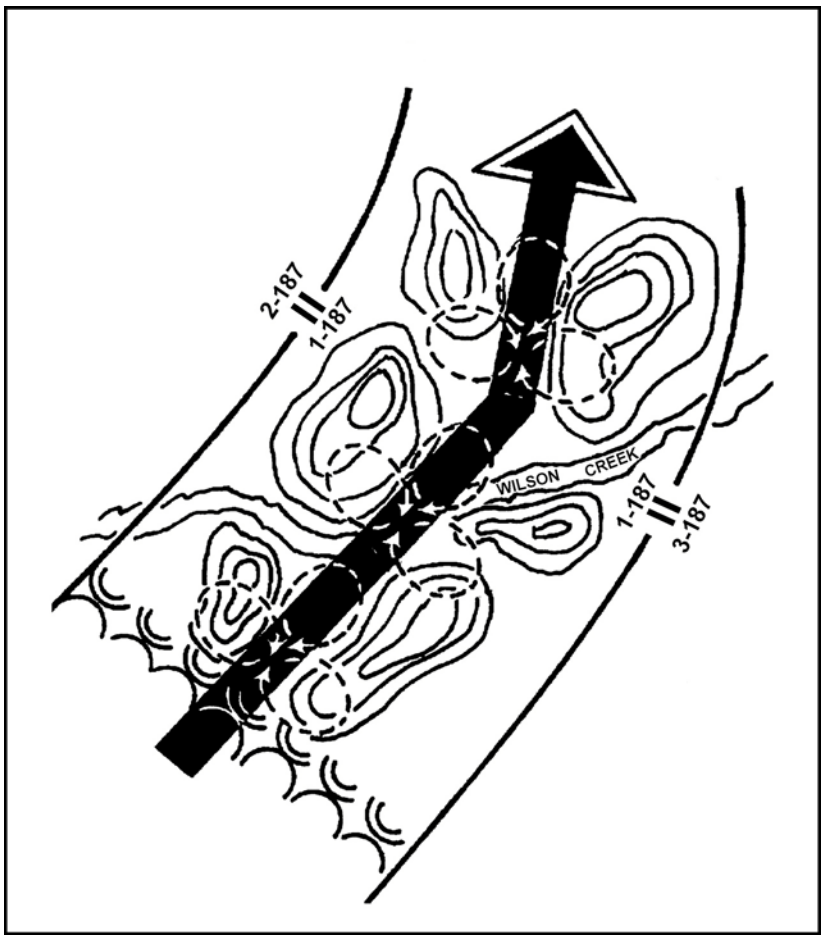

Figure 4-9. Route reconnaissance with fans.

4-31. STEALTH AND SPEED

If the platoon must conduct a route reconnaissance as part of the higher unit's mission, then stealth and speed, in conjunction with detailed intelligence reporting, become key. The reconnaissance platoon must remain far enough ahead of the maneuver force to assist in early warning and to prevent the force from becoming surprised. In this case, the fan method may not be as effective as a modification of the converging-routes method.

4-32. MOVEMENT NEAR ROADS

If all or part of the proposed route is a road, the platoon considers the road a danger area. It moves parallel to the road using a covered and concealed route. When required, reconnaissance and control and security teams move close to the road to reconnoiter key areas.

4-33. ENGINEER SUPPORT

Engineers can support the platoon in collecting technical information. They assist the reconnaissance platoon by clearing obstacles and classifying bridges. (For detailed information on classifying routes and bridges, refer to FM 5-34.)

4-34. ROUTE RECONNAISSANCE OVERLAY

The reconnaissance platoon reports conditions that are likely to affect the friendly movement in accordance with (IAW) the SOP and prepares an overlay of the route. (Figure 4-10 is an example of a route reconnaissance overlay using standard symbols.)

a. **Required Information**. The overlay must include--
   - Two grid references.
   - Magnetic north arrow.
   - Route drawn to scale.
   - Title block.
   - Route classification formula.

b. **Additional Information**. The overlay may also include--
   - Road curves having a radius less than 45 meters.
   - Steep grades with their maximum gradients.
   - Road width of constrictions (bridges, tunnels, and so forth) with width and lengths of the traveled ways in meters.
   - Underpass limitations with limiting heights and widths in meters.
   - Bridge bypasses classified as easy, difficult, or impossible.
   - Civil or military road numbers or other designations.
   - Location of fords, ferries, and tunnels, including limiting information.

4-35. EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The following employment considerations apply when planning a route reconnaissance:

- Time.
- Detail of reconnaissance required.
- Accuracy of information on the enemy from the IPB.
- Terrain.

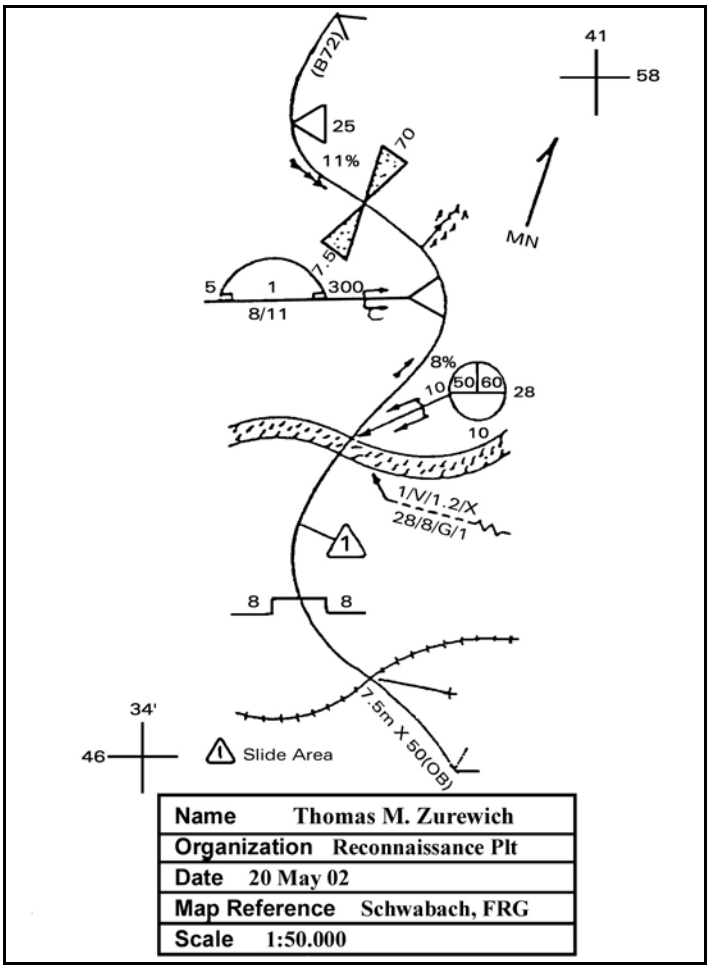

Figure 4-10. Example of a route reconnaissance overlay.

4-36. KEY TASKS

During route reconnaissance, the platoon must be trained for and prepared to accomplish a variety of reconnaissance tasks. Based on factors of METT-TC and the commander's intent, the commander may direct the platoon to conduct reconnaissance for a general purpose or to acquire only specific information. To ensure the platoon is ready for either situation, the platoon leader must be prepared to conduct the following tasks:

- Determine route trafficability.
- Reconnoiter terrain that dominates the route.
- Reconnoiter all lateral routes.
- Reconnoiter all built-up areas along the route.
- Inspect and classify all bridges on the route.
- Locate fords or crossing sites near all bridges on the route.
- Inspect and classify all overpasses, underpasses, and culverts.
- Reconnoiter all defiles along the route.
- Locate minefields and other obstacles along the route.
- Locate a bypass around built-up areas, obstacles, restrictions, and contaminated areas.

- Report route information.
- Find and report all enemy forces that can influence movement along the route.

4-37. TECHNIQUES

The reconnaissance platoon needs to be prepared to conduct two detailed route reconnaissance missions at a time. The following example outlines the aspects of getting all tasks accomplished rapidly and securely:

a. The order the platoon leader receives specifies the route the platoon must reconnoiter and defines the route from start point (SP) to RP. Additionally, the order may specify platoon boundaries, phase lines, LD, and a LOA or reconnaissance objective. These control measures specify how much terrain on both sides of the route the platoon must reconnoiter and where the operation must begin and end.

b. Boundaries are drawn on both sides to include the terrain that dominates the route. This ensures that the platoon reconnoiters all terrain the enemy could use to influence movement along the route. The LD is drawn from one boundary to the other behind the SP. This allows the platoon to cross the LD and be fully deployed before reaching the route. The LOA or objective is placed beyond the RP on the last terrain feature that dominates the route or at a location out to about 3 kilometers. (Figure 4-11 shows some examples of control measures for the route reconnaissance operation.)

c. The platoon leader may add additional phase lines, contact points, and checkpoints to the graphics he receives from the commander. Phase lines help control the maneuver of the platoon. Contact points ensure that the sections or teams maintain contact at particular critical points. Checkpoints along the route or on specific terrain control movement or designate areas that must be reconnoitered.

d. In coordination with the FSO, the platoon leader plans artillery targets on known or suspected enemy positions and on dominant terrain throughout the area of operations. The platoon leader evaluates the factors of METT-TC to select a platoon organization. He ensures that at least one section has responsibility for reconnoitering the route.

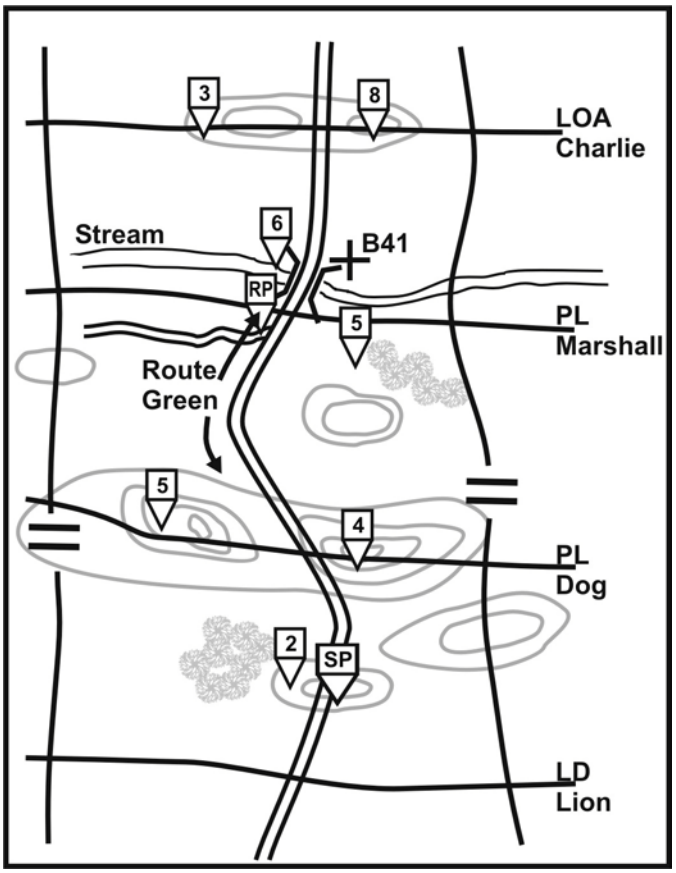

Figure 4-11. Control measures.

Section VII. URBAN RECONNAISSANCE

The platoon collects information from local nationals outside of the urban area to gain information on the objective. Depending on the time available, the platoon develops the urban situation progressively as it moves from the surrounding area toward the city. The platoon leader may refine objectives and routes as he gains and analyzes information. RSTA assets should provide information about the local population to include attitudes and dispositions toward US forces. The reconnaissance platoon then conducts reconnaissance of the urban area. The platoon develops an understanding of the regional, local, and neighborhood-level situation. The platoon members must learn the characteristics of the urban area.

4-38. EMPLOY DISMOUNTED SURVEILLANCE TEAMS

The primary method of employing surveillance teams is in a hide or surveillance site. However, the terrain, mission, and location of the site may dictate that the teams establish a separate surveillance site (or sites) to effectively observe the area.

a. **Personnel Requirements**. Personnel requirements depend on the mission and conditions under which surveillance teams must operate. At least two soldiers are required to conduct surveillance. One observes while the other records the information in the surveillance log. Because observer efficiency decreases rapidly, the observer and the recorder switch duties about every 30 minutes. When using night-vision devices, the observer's initial period of viewing is 10 minutes followed by a 15-minute rest period.

After several periods of viewing, the observation period is extended to 15-20 minutes. Hide site personnel should be rotated every 24 hours.

b. **Surveillance Sites**. During limited visibility, two to three (normally three) members may be required to set up a new surveillance site. The site is near the target area so that information may be collected through close-in observation and sound detection. The remainder of the team stays in the hide site. The surveillance site and the route to and from it are selected during good visibility. Members go in and out of the surveillance site during limited visibility. One member observes, one records, and one maintains security to the rear and flanks. Only passive night-vision devices are used to help prevent detection.

c. **Hide Sites**. The hide site may not be suitable for transmitting reports. When this is the case, a separate communication site is needed. At least two soldiers are required at the communication site; one to send the message and erect an antenna (if necessary) and one to provide security. The communication site is occupied long enough to transmit the message and conceal any signs of the team's presence.

d. **Hasty Sites**. These are sites the team plans to occupy for a short period (generally less than six hours). This occurs most often during target-acquisition missions.

(1) The team makes the best use of natural cover and concealment. It uses manmade camouflage materials as required to improve concealment and keeps movement to a minimum.

(2) Generally, two or three members are positioned forward to observe the target area and record information. The hasty hide site is positioned far enough to the rear so it is out of the direct line of enemy observation. The distance depends on terrain and vegetation. It must be far enough away from the surveillance element so that if an enemy force discovers one of the two elements, the other element has enough standoff to prevent it from being discovered also.

(3) The position allows the elements to fire on the enemy and enables one or both to break contact. Team members in the hasty hide site maintain rear and flank security. Communications are normally conducted after the team moves away from the area.

e. **Urban Surveillance Sites**. Surveillance teams can construct fixed urban hide sites in occupied and abandoned buildings, on water tanks, in shrubbery, on rooftops, or in attics of multistory buildings or other tall structures. If possible, teams should avoid wooden and significantly deteriorated buildings because of the risk of injury from fire and structural failure. Fixed sites should not be in buildings that will attract the enemy’s attention but should be in rubble, yards, and gardens. If the site is to be set up in an undamaged part of the urban area, teams select buildings of solid construction with serviceable stairs and basements that can be equipped for the rest and shelter of personnel. Site construction may consist simply of taking a position by a suitable viewing port, or it can be much more elaborate, time being a crucial factor. The team fills windows, doors, and other openings with bricks, fragments of building materials, or sandbags, if available, and removes flammable objects from the premises. If the enemy has previously occupied the building, the team takes precautions against booby traps and mines. When the enemy is near, the team prepares several places in the building for observation and departure.

f. **Hasty Subsurface Sites**. A hasty subsurface site is constructed when there is not enough time to construct a complete subsurface site. The site is especially useful when there is little natural cover and concealment.

(1) Considerations in the employment of hasty subsurface sites include the following:

- Lower profile than surface surveillance sites.
- Better protection against small-arms weapons and indirect fires.
- Excellent camouflage.
- Requirement to conceal soil.
- Time required to construct.
- Construction noise.

(2) Materials that may prove useful in building the position include the following:

- Ponchos or other waterproofing.
- Yetti net or small camouflage net to assist in camouflage.
- Entrenching tool.
- 550 cord or bungee cord.
- Chicken wire (optional).
- Burlap or canvas (optional).
- Sandbags.
- Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe with connectors.
- Fiberglass rod.
- Plywood.

4-39. URBAN PATROLLING

The reconnaissance platoon will not perform building-to-building clearance in urban areas. They may, however, perform urban patrolling to accomplish reconnaissance missions. Urban patrols can be conducted either mounted or dismounted with vehicles in support, depending on the enemy situation. Patrols should never be conducted lower than section level. Detailed planning, as discussed earlier in this chapter, is accomplished before execution of a patrol. Using maps, aerial photography, and any other intelligence, the reconnaissance platoon leader conducts preliminary route reconnaissance to identify the following features:

- Insertion and extraction routes.
- Choke points along the routes.
- Escape and evasion directions or corridors.

a. **Mounted Patrolling**. Mounted patrols capitalize on the mobility of the reconnaissance platoon's vehicles. Mounted patrols never enter an area via the route they will use to exit the area. Vehicles should travel at moderate speeds, with the lead vehicle stopping only to investigate those areas that pose a potential threat or support the essential tasks of the patrol. Use a vehicle speed of 15 to 20 miles per hour to allow for adequate observation and quick reaction. Slower speeds may allow noncombatants or a more aggressive group to impede movement. On the other hand, vehicles should move at high speeds only when responding to an incident. Equipment stored externally on the vehicle should be secured high enough to prevent the problems of locals trying to snatch equipment and weapons. When vehicles must stop the vehicle commander is at the ready, and the driver remains in his seat with the engine running. It is imperative that the

platoon maintains an accurate COP and awareness of the location of other friendly elements during patrols; this includes orientation on other patrols in the urban area. Other mounted urban patrolling principles include the following:

- Ensure mutual support and depth by maintaining constant observation among vehicles.
- Coordinate a supporting fire plan with all units in the area.
- Maintain all-round security.
- Develop a reliable communications plan for mounted and dismounted elements.
- Adjust patrol routes and speed to promote deception and avoid repetitive patterns.

b. **Dismounted Patrolling.** During urban reconnaissance, dismounted patrolling is used to collect information the battalion needs to be successful. Patrols are organized no lower than team level. Leaders of dismounted patrols must maintain communications with vehicles and the patrol headquarters throughout the mission. In the reconnaissance platoon, vehicles must be prepared to react to any situation the dismounted element may encounter. Patrols should avoid areas with large masses of civilians that could quickly turn against the patrol. As with mounted patrols, dismounted patrol leaders must be ready to contact other patrols or supporting elements for support in unfavorable or dangerous situations.

c. **Subterranean Patrolling**. Reconnaissance of subterranean systems can determine enemy use of the passageway, determine subterranean capabilities, or provide support for isolating the urban area. The team leader organizes his patrol with one soldier tasked with security to the front, one point man, and one soldier tasked with rear security. If available, an engineer should assist the team leader in classifying the passageway or eliminating obstacles. The team leader navigates and records data through the passage. Two soldiers remain at the point of entry as a security post. They are responsible for enemy detection and serve as a communications link between the team leader and higher.

(1) The team leader should carry a map or sketch, compass, street plan, and information requirements. A team member should carry the tools needed to open manhole covers. The point man is equipped with night-vision goggles. All soldiers entering the passageway should carry a sketch of the subterranean systems to include magnetic north, azimuths, distances, and manholes. They should also have flashlights, gloves, and chalk for marking features along the route.

(2) In addition to chemical agents, noxious gases from decomposing sewage, especially methane gas, can pose a threat. These gases are not detected by NBC detection systems nor are they completely filtered out by the protective mask. Physical signs (nausea and dizziness) indicate their presence in harmful quantities. Team leaders should be constantly alert to these signs and know the shortest route to the surface for fresh air.

(3) Once the team is organized and equipped, it moves to the entrance of the tunnel. The point man then descends into the tunnel to determine whether the air is safe to breathe and if movement is restricted. The point man should remain in the tunnel for 10 minutes before the rest of the team follows. If he becomes ill or is exposed to danger, the team can use a safety rope to pull him out.

(4) When the patrol is moving through the tunnel, the point man moves about 10 meters in front of the team leader. Other team members maintain five-meter intervals. If

the water in the tunnel is flowing fast or if the subterranean system contains slippery obstacles, the intervals should be increased to prevent all members from falling if one man slips.

(5) The team leader should note the azimuth and pace count of each turn he takes in the tunnel. When the team encounters a manhole to the surface, the point man should open it and determine the location, which the team leader then records. Recognition signals with friendly troops must be coordinated to prevent fratricide as the point man opens the manhole.

(6) Once the patrol has returned and submitted its report, the commander decides how to use the tunnel. Sealing off manhole covers and emplacing obstacles in the tunnel are options for the commander. The patrol's report is converted into an overlay for the urban operations sketch, which is sent to battalion.

4-40. ASSESSMENT OF THE AREA OF OPERATIONS

The platoon leader receives and analyzes the information gathered by the reconnaissance and surveillance teams. He then assesses the area of operations according to the mission and intent of higher headquarters. The assessment includes, but is not limited to, these elements:

- Enemy composition and activity.
- Areas of vulnerability to friendly forces.
- Key terrain.
- Approach routes for mounted and dismounted forces.
- Entry points or points of penetration.
- Support positions for direct and indirect systems.
- Civilian disposition.
- Density and composition of urban area.
- Hazard areas (fuel storage, natural gas lines, chemical production sites).
- Communication facilities.
- Retransmission sites.
- Intent of civilian populace (stay or flee).

4-41. END STATE

The efforts of the reconnaissance platoon can be a critical factor in shaping the urban area of operations and in maximizing the effectiveness of the battalion. A summary of the platoon’s tasks in the urban environment includes the following:

- Develop and distribute urban operations sketches.
- Reconnoiter recommended entry points and routes.
- Maintain surveillance on key objectives.
- Conduct target acquisition.
- Assist in isolation of the area of operations by conducting screening operations (or establishing checkpoints) on the perimeter.
- Conduct battle handover with the lead elements of the battalion and pass them into the urban AO.

Section VIII. RECONNAISSANCE OF OBSTACLES AND RESTRICTIONS

One of the common tasks associated with reconnaissance missions is location and reconnaissance of obstacles and restrictions that may affect the trafficability of a particular route or axis.

4-42. TYPES OF OBSTACLES AND RESTRICTIONS

Obstacles can be either existing or reinforcing. These obstacles include--

- Minefields.
- Bridges.
- Log obstacles such as abatis, log cribs, stumps, and posts.
- Destroyed or damaged buildings.
- Antitank ditches.
- Wire entanglements.
- Defiles.
- Persistent agent contamination.

4-43. TASKS

The reconnaissance platoon's ability to deal with an obstacle or restriction is extensive in certain aspects and somewhat limited in others. The reconnaissance platoon has the capability to reduce or breach small obstacles; however, this is generally limited to point obstacles that are not integrated into the enemy defense and are not covered by enemy fire and observation. Such obstacles are usually found along routes and not at enemy strongpoints. When the reconnaissance platoon encounters obstacles that support an enemy defense, it has the capability to assist the infantry with breaching.

a. **Deliberate Obstacles**. Most importantly, the platoon reconnoiters tactical obstacles, including supporting enemy positions, and determines possible breach sites.

b. **Bypasses**. Another important reconnaissance task is to locate bypasses around obstacles and restrictions.

c. **Engineers**. The battalion may task-organize engineer reconnaissance teams to the reconnaissance platoon to aid in obstacle reconnaissance. An engineer squad is often attached to the reconnaissance platoon to aid in reconnoitering obstacles and restrictions. This squad provides expertise in collecting obstacle intelligence (OBSTINTEL) and has limited breaching capability.

4-44. ELEMENTS OF OBSTACLE RECONNAISSANCE

How the reconnaissance platoon approaches obstacle reconnaissance depends on METT-TC factors. In general, however, the following five steps ensure an organized and efficient operation under most METT-TC conditions.

a. **Detection.** During reconnaissance operations, the reconnaissance platoon must locate and evaluate manmade and natural obstacles and restrictions to support the movement of its parent unit. Detection of obstacles and restrictions begins in the planning phase of an operation when the S2 conducts IPB. The reconnaissance platoon combines the S2's work with the reconnaissance conducted during the troop-leading process (normally a map reconnaissance only) to identify all possible obstacles and restrictions within AOs. The platoon leader then plans the reconnaissance based on the orders he receives, the S2's IPB, and the platoon leader's own map reconnaissance.

(1) The reconnaissance platoon uses visual and physical means to detect mines and obstacles while conducting its mission. It visually inspects terrain for signs of mine emplacement and other obstacles. It also must be alert to dangerous battlefield debris such as bomblets from cluster bomb units (CBUs) or dual-purpose improved conventional munitions (DPICMs).

(2) Mines and other types of obstacles can be difficult for mounted elements to detect; therefore, the platoon must also conduct obstacle detection while dismounted. It may need to dismount the vehicles several hundred meters short of a suspected obstacle and approach the obstacle on foot to conduct reconnaissance. The platoon looks for disturbed earth, unusual or out-of-place features, surface-laid mines, tilt rods, and tripwires. It can incorporate vehicle-mounted thermal sights into the search to help detect surface-laid mines.

(3) Physical detection methods include detonating, probing, and using a mine detector. Detection occurs when a vehicle, soldier, or countermine system physically encounters a mine. This method does not indicate the boundaries of the obstacle. The reconnaissance platoon must probe or conduct additional visual inspection to define the extent of the minefield.

b. **Area Security and Reconnaissance.** Enemy forces often cover their obstacles with observation and fire. Whenever platoon members encounter an obstacle, they must proceed with their reconnaissance assuming the enemy can observe and engage them. The reconnaissance element that detects the obstacle establishes overwatch before it proceeds with the reconnaissance. The members in overwatch look out for signs of enemy forces in and around the obstacle or in positions that allow observation of the obstacle. They visually search the dominant terrain on the far side of the obstacle for evidence of enemy positions or ambushes. Once they confirm the enemy situation from the near side, the element not in overwatch moves (mounted or dismounted) to find bypasses around the obstacle. If it finds a bypass, it moves around the obstacle and establish OPs on the far side to provide 360-degree security of the obstacle. If it is unable to find a bypass, it must conduct its reconnaissance from the near side under the security of the overwatch elements.

c. **Obstacle Reconnaissance.** After establishing security, the reconnaissance platoon then moves dismounted to the obstacle. The soldiers take care when reconnoitering it. Trip wires or other signs may indicate enemy usage of booby traps or command-detonated mines to prevent friendly forces from determining pertinent information about the obstacle (OBSTINTEL). The platoon collects all potentially important information, especially information that may help in planning a breach and verifying the enemy template. The reconnaissance element reconnoitering the obstacle prepares an obstacle report with this information and forwards the report through the platoon leader or PSG to the commander. Examples of OBSTINTEL include--

- Obstacle location.
- Obstacle orientation.
- Soil conditions.
- Presence of wire, gaps, and bypasses.
- Composition of complex obstacles.
- Minefield composition, including types of mines.
- Breaching requirements.

- Gaps between successive obstacle belts.
- Location of enemy direct fire weapons.

Before recommending to the battalion commander a possible course of action, the reconnaissance platoon leader analyzes the situation and the factors of METT-TC and considers the following options.

(1) ***Bypass***. A bypass is the preferred technique the reconnaissance platoon uses when it encounters an obstacle. A good bypass must allow the entire force to avoid the primary obstacle without risking further exposure to enemy ambush and without diverting the force from its objective. Bypassing conserves reduction assets and maintains the momentum of the moving unit. If the platoon leader decides to bypass and his commander approves, the unit must mark the bypass and report it to the commander. It may be required to provide guides for the main body if the bypass is difficult to locate or visibility conditions are poor. If the obstacle is part of a prepared defensive position and the only available bypass canalizes friendly forces into an enemy engagement area or ambush, the platoon must find an alternate bypass.

(2) ***Support a Breaching Operation***. When the reconnaissance platoon locates a large obstacle that cannot be easily bypassed, its primary option is to support a breaching operation. The unit performs additional reconnaissance and security tasks as necessary. These may include determining the amount of time and resources required to reduce the obstacle and locating the best available reduction site.

NOTE: If he expects to encounter large obstacles during an operation, the commander may direct engineer reconnaissance teams to move with the unit to determine much of the information needed for breaching.

(a) The reconnaissance platoon's effort focuses on the following features:

- Fighting positions for support force weapons on the near side of the obstacle.
- Trafficable routes to the reduction site and routes from the far side leading to the objective.
- Dispersed covered and concealed areas near the reduction site.
- Work areas on the near side for reduction assets of the breach force.
- Fighting positions on the far side once a foothold is established.
- Positions on both sides of the obstacle that could facilitate enemy observation of the reduction site.
- Trafficability and soil conditions near the reduction site. (This is especially important for minefield reduction because mine-clearing blades do not work properly in all soil conditions.)
- Width, depth, bottom condition, bank height, and slope and soil stability of wet and dry gaps.
- Water velocity of wet gaps.
- Wind direction for obscuration of the obstacle.

(b) Working closely with engineers makes gathering OBSTINTEL much easier. If he expects to encounter large obstacles during a mission, the reconnaissance platoon leader should request an attached engineer reconnaissance team or, as a minimum, an engineer NCO to serve as a technical advisor.

(c) After the reconnaissance platoon reports the necessary information to the commander, it maintains security of the obstacle and serves as a guide, if necessary, for the breach force. The information it provides is used by the commander and his engineers to prepare the suppression, obscuration, security, reduction, and assault (SOSRA) plans for the breach. The reconnaissance element maintains security during the breaching operation and calls for and adjusts indirect fire, as necessary, in support of the breaching operation. It must be in position to move rapidly through the obstacle once a lane is created so it can continue the mission.

(3) ***Continue the Mission***. When the reconnaissance platoon encounters a restriction, such as a bridge or defile, it may find that the restriction is not an obstacle to movement and is not covered by enemy fire or observation. The reconnaissance platoon may also discover dummy minefields or obstacles that are incomplete and easily passed through. Under these conditions, the COA may be to report this information and then continue the reconnaissance mission.